NEWS, REVIEWS, AND COMMENT YOU'LL FIND NOWHERE ELSE!

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BEMUSING MAGAZINE COMIC MART SPECIAL

5p

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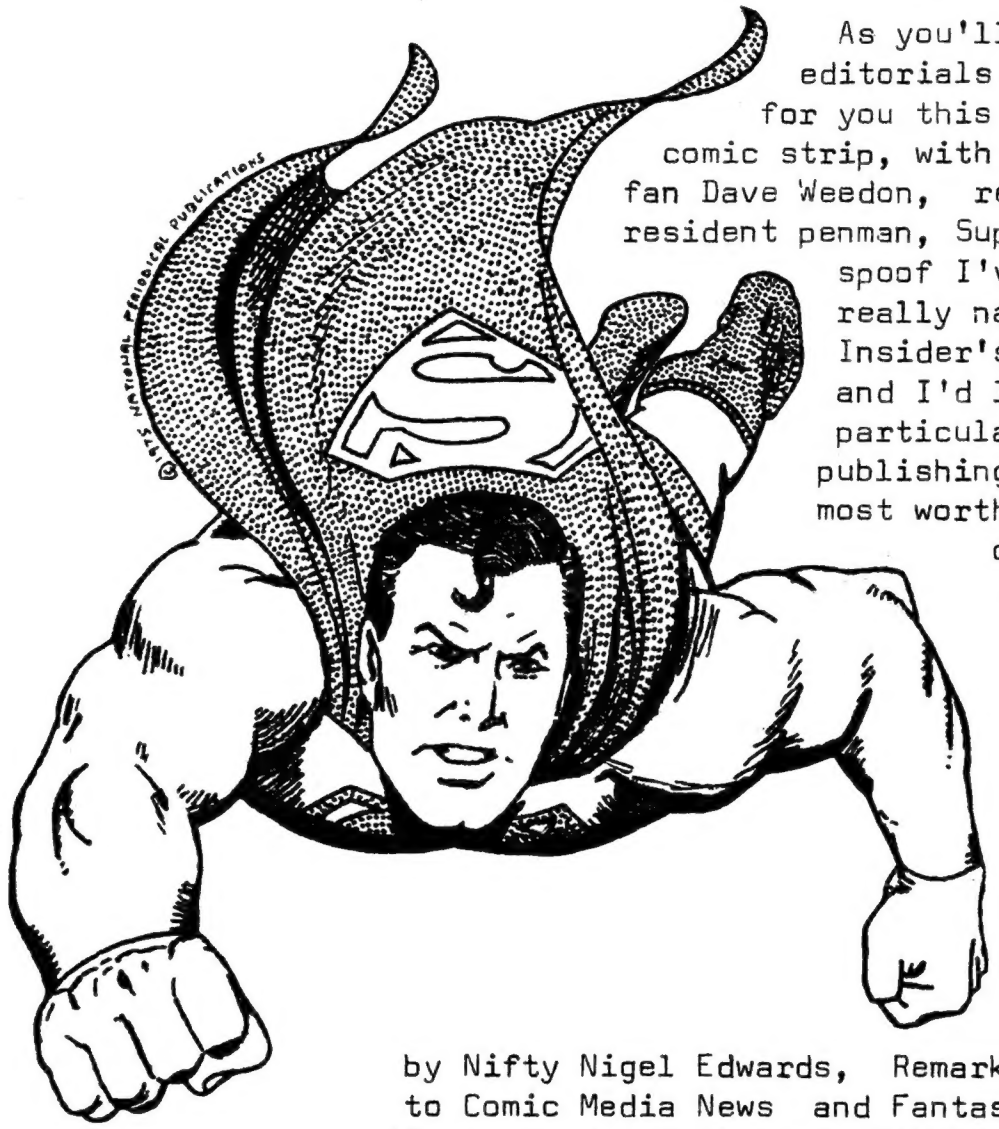
BEMUSINGS



As you'll have seen by now, unless you read editorials first, we've got some new features for you this time. First of all, there is a new comic strip, with script and original art by London fan Dave Weedon, re-drawn to fit our format by Bem's resident penman, Superswipe--I think it's the funniest spoof I've seen for years. Then there is a really nasty fan gossip column--it reflects Insider's opinions, not necessarily my own, and I'd like to apologise to Alan Austin in particular for the comments about his fan publishing activities; his Price Guide is a most worthy book, and I recommend it to all comic-buyers, with the warning that you can't expect to find every mag Alan lists at exactly his prices.

Other innovations for Bem are a letters page, printing all 3 letters Bem-3 prompted - c'mon, you people, I need your words of wisdom... REACT! (and get a free advance copy of Bem-5 if your letter's printed...) and the Bem "Fanzine Directory", a few useful addresses for newer fans, and news, art and reviews, by Nifty Nigel Edwards, Remarkable Ruan Lanihorne (a contributor to Comic Media News and Fantasy Unlimited), Enigmatic Ed Sallis (Comic Fandom Bulletin's FANHUNTER), Gregarious Greg Chown, Sneaky ol' Superswipe, and your friendly neighbourhood editor.

1975 should be a good year for Bemusing, all in all; counting co-productions, like last December's N-Zine Special, we should manage four or five issues by the end of the year. I'm afraid that our next issue will have to show a fairly hefty price rise, as I've been notified of a 30% increase in print costs, while the reductions (all our pages are reduced 20% in size, to fit more words and pictures in) are costing £1.50 extra this time. I'd have to put the price up to 8p for this size of issue, or charge 10p and add an extra sheet - which would you prefer? But on the editorial side, we'll make it all worth your while, with news and cover reproductions, views and reviews, fan art and features, all second to no other fanzine in the country. Fair enough?

Martin

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ART CREDITS:
Greg Chown--3, 8, and 11
Superswipe--1,2,6,9, and 10.
THANKS:
Richard Burton, and the Comic Media News Service; TCR; Bram Stokes; Paul Rose; Reliable Rob Barrow; Trevor L Hughes; George Barnett; Subscribers; Rich Morrissey; contributors; Bob Lee; Martin's Books; you!

NEWS

MARVEL: NEW SERIES FOR MYSTERY BOOKS

WHERE MONSTERS DWELL is to spotlight a Night Stalker-type character soon, called BLOODSTONE, written by John David Warner, while DEAD OF NIGHT will feature a series by Scott Edelman & artist Rico Rival, THE SCARECROW; another new series MORDRED THE MYSTIC will appear in the back of Giant-Size Werewolf, written by Bill Mantlo.

MORE ROBERT E. HOWARD BOOKS PLANNED

Marvel is discussing giving RED SONJA her own colour comic for a few issues, as a trial; also on the cards is a new KULL book, with a back-up feature starring in rotation Solomon Kane, Bran Mak Morn, and other Howard heroes. If this does happen, Wrightson might do a Solomon Kane story.

CHANGES IN THE BLACK & WHITE LINE

Haunt of Horror was cancelled to make room for a new DOC SAVAGE book; now Tales of the Zombie & Monsters Unleashed are to end (with TotZ 10 & MU 11), for new books Marv Wolfman calls "the most exciting new concepts to ever appear in black & white books." MARVEL PREVIEW 3 will feature The Mighty Thor, the first Marvel super-hero to be featured in a b&w mag since the '68 "Spectacular Spider-Man" ≠1.

AND...

Frank Brunner is illustrating "Scarlet Citadel" from Conan the Usurper for Giant Size Conan as well as painting covers for many titles. Walt Simonson will draw, for Savage Sword, a regular feature on life in the Hyborian Age--script by Roy Thomas. A future issue of MARVEL 2 IN 1 will star The Thing and Black Widow; Yellowjacket will reappear in AVENGERS soon; Iron Fist and Shang-Chi will alternate in DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU, behind Adams covers.

DC: NEW TITLES NAMED

The "top-secret" book of "The Man With the Stolen Soul" is now revealed as THE STALKER, by Paul Levitz, Steve Ditko, and Wally Wood--it is to debut in FIRST ISSUE SPECIAL, shortly. TALES OF GHOST CASTLE's a new mystery book, edited by Blaisdell, ≠1 is a May-June release, as is TOR ≠1 by Joe Kubert, JUSTICE INC. ≠1 by O'Neil and Al McWilliams, and CLAW THE UNCONQUERED 1 by David Michelinie & Ernie Chua. The May issue of 1ST ISSUE SPECIAL (≠2) is GREEN TEAM by Joe Simon & Jerry Grandenetti--≠3 will be METAMORPHO. The Denny O'Neil kung fu book, now out, is RICHARD DRAGON, KUNG FU FIGHTER, adapted by Jim Dennis from an Award Books series (available in the U.K. for 35p each, Denny says) he writes, with fine art by Leopoldo Duranona.

AND...

Aquaman is slated for big things this year. Curt Swan is to pencil the Wonder Woman story narrated by Elongated Man. A new Deadman series begins in THE PHANTOM STRANGER ≠42, after being a guest-star in 39-41. Metal Men are The Batman's co-stars in an issue of The Brave & Bold coming up. Mr Mxyzptlk will return to the Superman book soon, for a 5 page tale.

ATLAS: SHOCKS

Except for the ≠1 MOVIE MONSTERS, all Seaboard b&ws are dropped, after March issues. Contrary to previous rumours, THE SCORPION 25-center is to continue. Issue 2 was delayed by Howie Chaykin's deadline troubles, and is now cover-dated May; the character will in future be drawn by Jim Craig, and brought into the 1970s. All of Atlas' books will have 19 pages of art.

...AND CHANGES!

A new book, THE BARBARIANS, will have a 10-page Iron Jaw tale drawn by Summers, plus a 9-page pirate story with Esteban Maroto art. Mike Fleischer is stopping working for Atlas, and there will be no more Neal Adams covers--instead, the bulk of covers will be by Frank Thorne. Gary Friedrich will be writing Tarantula & The Brute, Tony Isabella Grim Ghost, Morlock

continued on page 11...

Bemusing PRESENTS **SPIDEY-MAN AND CONMAN--TOGETHER?**

CONMAN

VS the AMUSING SPIDEY-MAN

PLOTTED & PENCILLED BY DAVE WEEDON
INVESTIGATED & INKED BY SUPERSWIPE
LAUGHED AT & LETTERED BY Emlock the Editor

ZAP! POW! SSSS THUMP! THWIP! BUKOOM! CHOWN!

SPIDEY HAS BEEN BELTING THE STUFFING OUT OF THE WICKED KLANG FOR THE PAST 9 ISSUES...

KLANG'S RUTHLESS MIND EVALUATES HIS CHANCES OF ESCAPE!

NIL...

OH, WORRY WORRY! AUNT MAY'S PREGGERS!

COME BACK, JACK! -STAN

SAG!

USING HIS SUPER-SUB-MINIATURE ATOMIC TIME-DEVICE (HIDDEN IN HIS Y-FRONTS), CRAFTY KLANG CONJURES UP A TIME DOOR!

FLASH!

AND SPIDEY FALLS THRU!* (GHOSH!!)

1952 1422 1333 1913 4711 B.C.

COME BACK, HOWIE! - STAN

*NOTICE ETHNIC U.S. SPELLING! - MARTIN

WORRY! NEUROSIS! HANG-UP!

BARRY SMITH DREW HERE!

JOHN B. DREW HERE!

FORBIDDEN TOMB 1/2 MILE

OOH! I HATE SPIDERS!

ER... TROUBLE?

HOLY COW! 6 PAGES AND NO PLUGS! SO, HERE GOES...

COME BACK, WALLY! JIM! GRAY! -STAN

GAHH!

AAAAAAHH

?? KOLL LIVES!

HEROIC, AIN'T IT, PILGRIM?

CONMAN CHASES OUR HERO(?) UNTIL, AS HE ROUNDS A CORNER...

GRRR...

EGGE!

GREEN POWER!

COME BACK, SHANE! -STAN

ME BULK! ME MAD!

BLAM!

ME STICK ONE ON YUH!

ASSORTED HELL JEWELS, DEMON SAPPHIRES, AWFUL OPALS, BACK ISSUES OF BEMUSING, CURSED AGATES, MARVEL BADGES, ETC, ETC.....

HAS HE GONE YET?

GO AWAY, DICK AND DON! -STAN

AW, GIMME ANOTHER CHANCE, FELLAS!

GAWD! NO! ANYTHING BUT THAT! HALP!

COME BACK, STEVE! -SPIDEY

ESADE

CERTAINLY NOT CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT LAND-MARK ISH!!

MILLIE THE MODEL vs THUNDRA!

DOC OCK vs NIGEL EDWARDS!

DEATHLOK, MORLOCK, AND WARLOCK MEET EMLOCK!

'NUFF SAID?

MARVEL CHARACTERS © 1975 MARVEL COMICS GROUP

Review Section

ORIGINS OF MARVEL COMICS by Stan Lee
Simon & Schuster, 1974; Ø5.95 paperbound, 256 pages, 7"x10"; hardcover edition, Ø9.95.

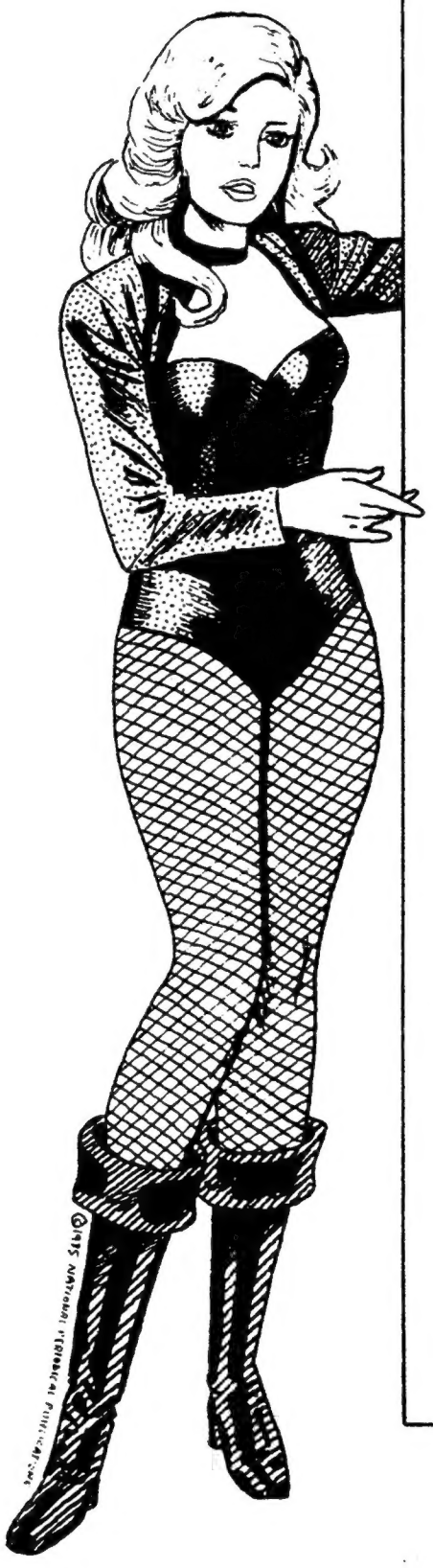
It's easy to approach this book in quite a wrong way. This is not a history of comics or of Marvel, or Stan Lee's autobiography; this is a collection of Marvel comics stories in a more durable form than the original magazines -- with the added inducement of a commentary written by the man who wrote the tales in the first place. Five of the most enduring and popular characters are singled out, and their origins reprinted, along with a later example from the crest of the Marvel Age, '66 to '69. Complete with the relevant covers, there are Fantastic Four ≠1 & ≠55, Hulk ≠1 & ≠118, the Spider-Man stories from Amazing Fantasy ≠15 & Spider-Man ≠72,* Thor's origin from Journey Into Mystery ≠83 and Thor ≠143, and the Doc Strange stories from ≠110 (his debut), ≠115 (his origin), and ≠155. Quite a selection, in fact; not unnaturally, Stan only uses his own stories (although he only plotted the first Thor story--his commentary gives full credit for the actual script to Larry Lieber, his younger brother)--they are the ones he knows most about, after all.

For your money, you get 43 pages of commentary, 8 cover reproductions (6"x9"), and 172 pages of story -- plus 33 pages blank, or just with titles: "There Shall Come a Jolly Green Giant", for example. One important point about the reprints is--they have been re-coloured. The changes in the mid-sixties examples are minor, but checking the Fantastic Four origin against my recently-acquired (and slightly tatty) copy of FF ≠1 shows drastic changes, especially in the portrayal of the Human Torch--his flame was a mixture of red and yellow originally, but now a solid red gives him a solid outline --and in panels originally coloured for mood, rather than realism. And why are the costumes they wore for that famous space-flight now purple-red, instead of blue? All this may sound trivial, but it changes the effect of Jack Kirby's art significantly; it's not as bad as FF Annual ≠1, which had the Torch redrawn completely, but it isn't authentic, it isn't what was published back in the autumn of 1961.

But it's a long time since these stories were available; even the latest round of British reprints aren't easily come by now, so, even with the over-vivid colouring, this is a good book to have available. If the British edition is (a) in colour, and (b) fairly cheap, it should find a home in a good many collections. The text is quite interesting, telling more about Stan the Man and the various artists than we usually hear. We can forgive Simon & Schuster for printing the last two introductions a few pages early--it makes the last words in the book, "Continued Next Issue!" -ML

*Not, as Stan's commentary seems to think, Spidey ≠1 & ≠82!

THE INSIDER STRIKES



There seems to be a row brewing at Alan Austin's Basement Sweat-Shop. As you probably know, Mr Austin publishes that well-known thick fanzine Fantasy Unlimited, neatly described by Mike Cruden, England's answer to Mr Natural, as appealing to the lowest common denominator; he also puts out a line of one-shot publications, and his handling of the art side of the latest of these, "The Comic-Book Price Guide for Great Britain", has thoroughly annoyed three (at least) of the FU "stable" of artists. He has blacked in part of the cover; he has arbitrarily cut art deadlines without notice; and, most importantly, he has rejected for no genuine reason solicited art by a number of artists. The idea he had was to have fan artists give their own interpretations of famous comic-book covers--it is, after all, cheaper than photographing numbers of original books. But, after up-and-coming young artists have spent three or four hours over an illustration for him, what happens? Without a word, it just isn't used. For a most appropriate revenge, watch one of the newest fanzines!

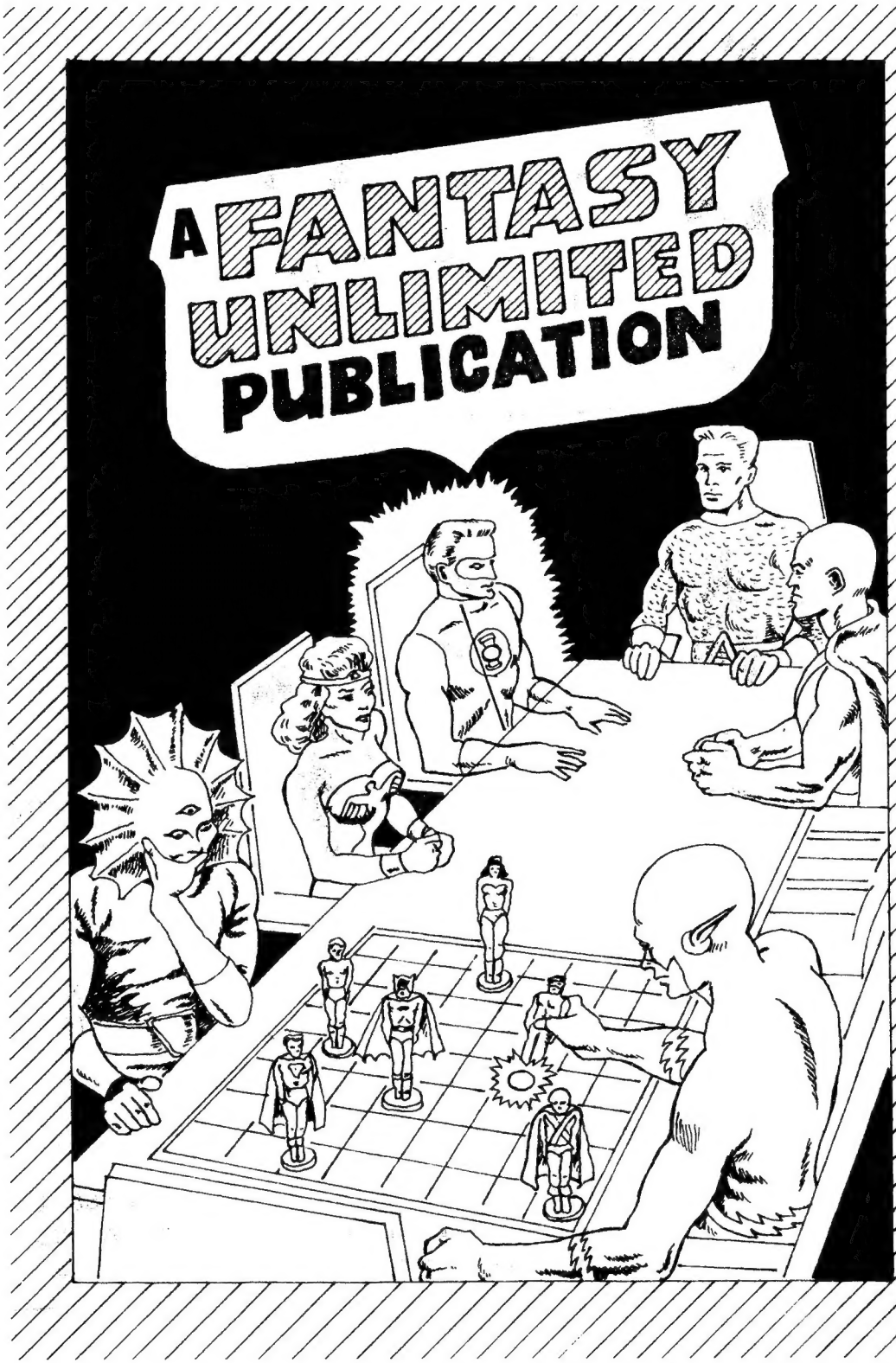
The Austin Price Guide is worth buying, by the way, for the incidental data--but for proper pricing, the pages I've seen are a dead loss. Even Mr Austin seems to realise this, as his own prices, which are not excessive (give the devil his due), are about 50% higher, for a fair old mixture of condition grades. Buy a copy--but don't believe the prices!

There's no doubt about it, Nick Landau certainly needs a course in business studies--as the lad has realised, sending himself to Coventry (university) for 3 years. His "monthly" CMDS Marvel imports are now about 3 months late -- and last time any did arrive, they went only to the most expensive retailer. Wake up -- or move aside!

One of the least praiseworthy habits of fanzine editors is lateness. Dez Skinn is killing his "published every seven weeks" Fantasy Advertiser by putting it out twice a year, full of out-of-date ads. What advertiser will wait three or four months to sell his mags? Rob Barrow deliberately gives his contributors misleading deadlines, and puts out Comic Fandom Bulletin in his own sweet time--Ed Sallis is unlikely to do another news column for him, and Martin Lock has told Mr Barrow he won't assist with issue 3 unless #2 is out well before the Mart--are Rob and Dez just lazy, or do they like having half-finished fanzines in a drawer somewhere?

That's all for now, fellow sufferers; but don't worry, I left plenty of Big Name Fans for next time--which, since it will cover Emlock the Ego-Tripper, may not be in Bemusing--heh heh, just joking, Martin!

-DMR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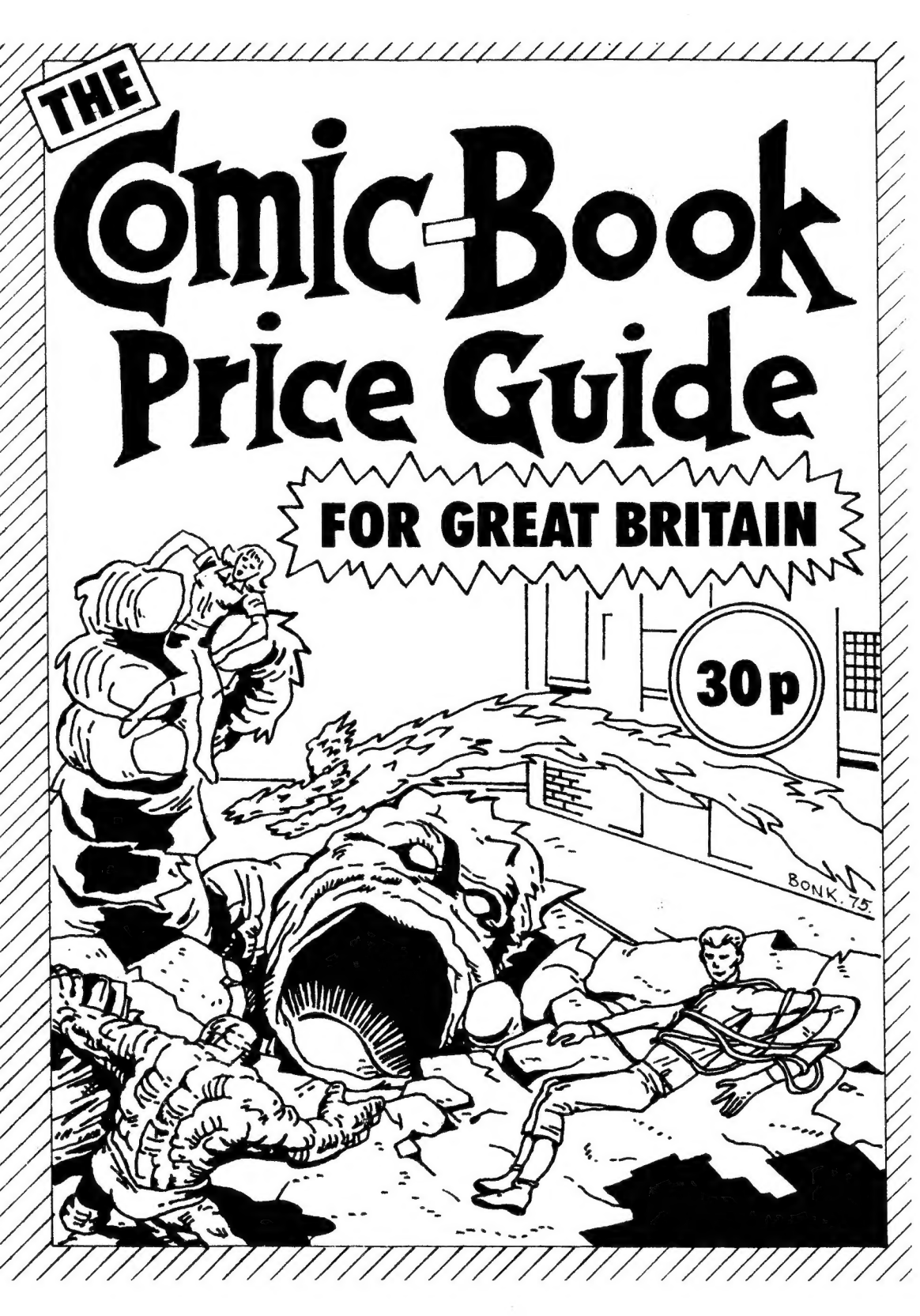
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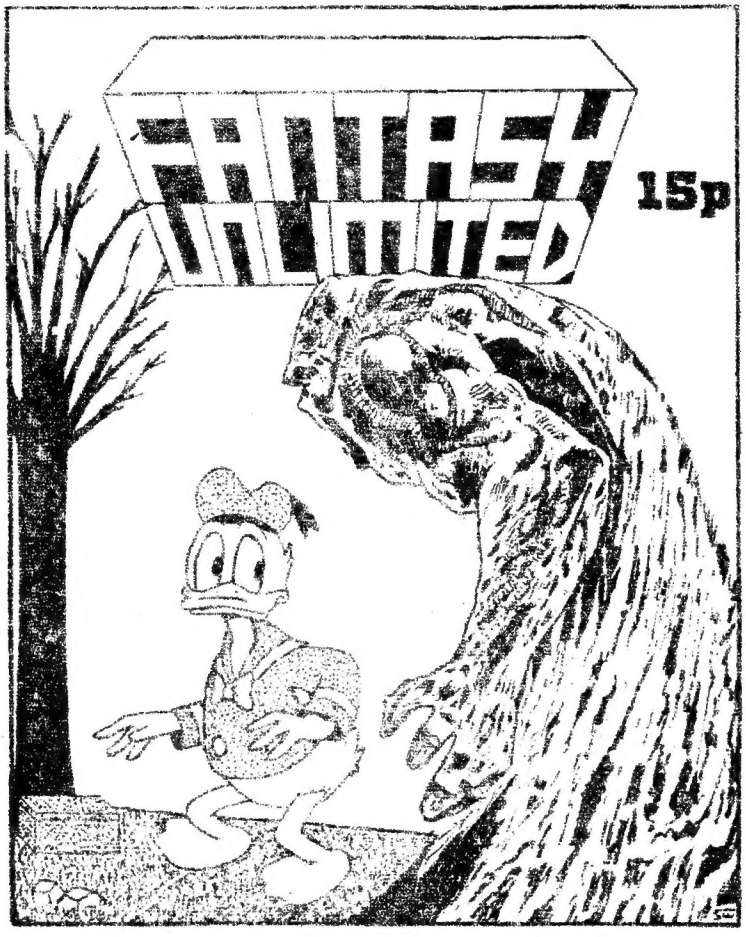

FANTASY UNLIMITED - Britain's Premier Article Fanzine, published bi-monthly by Alan Austin. Future issues will feature the Shadow, Captain Marvel, a series on DC's showcase heroes, plus the regular features "The Worlds of Emlock", "We Want Information", the letters column, a comics quiz, art by top fan artists, a large ad section, and as much else as can be fitted in; all for only 20p, or four issues for 70p, post included.

THE COMIC BO
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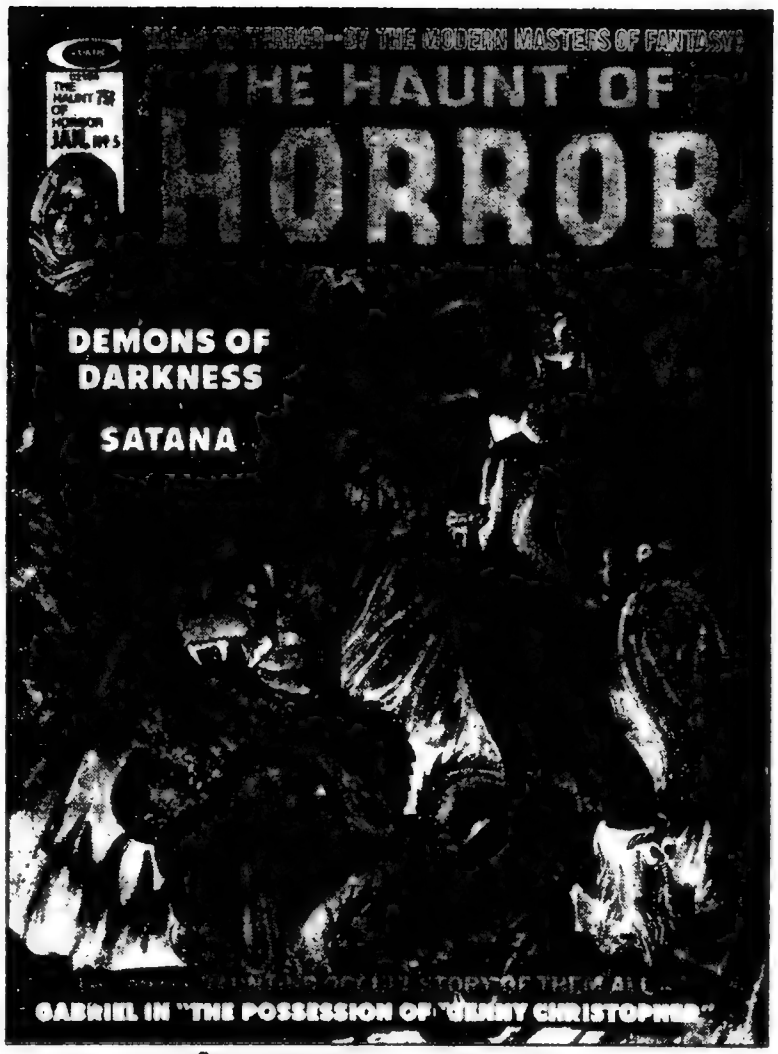
FANTASY UNLIMITED ALSO OPERATES A MAIL ORDER SERVICE FOR NEW MARVEL COMICS--PLEASE WRITE FOR DETAILS.

HAUNT OF HORROR No.5 (January)

There are four stories here, for a total of 49 pages, which is above average for the Marvel 75-centers. Gabriel, Devil-Hunter, has a twenty-page story, by Doug Moench and Sonny Trinidad, while Satana has 13 pages to play with, scripted by Chris Claremont, and drawn (not very enticingly) by George Evans. Moench and Evans team up for a piece called "Three Spiders On Gooseflesh" -- not that I noticed any spiders in the tale. What I did see was a quite illegible first caption, a movie poster with one star called "Fig Newton", and the old elevator-down-to-hell pay-off. Not that the story wasn't okay, as "man kills witch he married" plots go, while the art was up to standard - but there was no particular reason to do the story, except to fill 9 pages. The other non-series story, by David Kraft, Paul Kirchner, and Rudy Nebres, is rather better-- "Destination: Oblivion", a sad tale of the end of happiness for a deformed teenager. It has good art, innocence and evil, sacrifice and insanity... All in seven pages.

Haunt of Horror is about the most flexible Marvel black & white - it's a pity that it is being discontinued. -Ruan Lanihorne



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FANZINES RECEIVED DEPARTMENT

STARZINE No.1, January 1975, 15p; editor Andrew Johnson. Published bi-monthly by Eyeball Productions. By post, 20p.

Reviewed by Ed Sallis

First issues of fanzines always gladden the heart of fanzine reviewers. We can easily overlook any irregularities in printing, such as smudgy art clipped off at the edges, and words that dash headlong for the staples, and we smile indulgently at single-page feature articles, and stories written 16 years before by people with the same surname as the editor. Why? Because a new addition to fanzinedom is a cause for rejoicing. Will the new-born magazine become a regular title, like FU or CM News, or will it become one of those tiresome zines that trumpet their next issue months before it actually appears, full of year-old letters and analyses of sadism in the Beano? Well, STARZINE is off to quite a good start. Its approach is a bit too wide, with pop art and SF taking up valuable space, but there's a news column (a bit thin this time, as Rich Morrissey's main column arrived too late to go in), Reviews by Emlock (who admits it was a bit rushed), a Grand Fantasy Poll, two short text pieces (on Green Lantern & Green Arrow, and Kubert) and about five illos by Greg Chown, a nice article on Steranko's romp through comics by Nigel Long, Adrian Last (Martin told me to mention him, because he subscribes to Bem) with the longest piece in the issue, an interesting analysis of Robin's career, plus assorted bits of this and that. The cover, by Andy Johnson, is nicely drawn; but he should have had it properly printed, instead of relying on stencils. But STARZINE #1 is a promising start - I hope it appears every two months. -EMS

REACTION

RICHARD MORRISSEY
Massachusetts

I'd seen the mini-zine you put out at conventions, but Bemusing Magazine was a nice expansion on the same basic concept. I liked it very much--especially your adept "Bullpen Bulletins" parody and the reviews. I'm afraid I too was taken in by your Tarzan/Rima cover, until I re-read your letter, as it seemed to be a Mexican edition--and I wouldn't have been too surprised to see two such similar characters put together in one magazine, as in the German SUPERMAN UND BATMAN.

Although my news was substantially correct, one disadvantage of getting hold of news before the major newszines is that a certain amount of rumor gets mixed in. For example, I think the Marvel editorshio has, it turns out, pretty much fallen between Wein on the colour books and Wolfman on the b&w's -- Tony will be assisting in a subordinate capacity if at all; he has even given up FOOM to Scott Edelman. Irene Vartanoff, whom I saw at Rutland yesterday, says she's currently in charge of reprint selection--Marvel's answer to Nelson Bridwell, although she confesses she doesn't have his photo-graphic memory.

I'm quite proud of the bit about the JOKER book, on which I scooped just about everybody--some people assumed it'd be a one-shot, but it now definitely <u>is</u> a regular book, to be drawn by Novick; Chua will replace him on Batman himself.

Thanks for your (generally) favorable reviews and plugs for BATMANIA. Jim Jones himself insisted that Biljo do the front cover, and future issues have been/are all-offset, so I really do not think I made the wrong decision there. But then, I've never been able to understand why DC has Nick Cardy instead of Curt Swan do the Superman covers, or why Bob Oksner instead of Schaffenberger does them for SHAZAM, even when Schaff draws the inside story!

Good luck with Bemusing, FU, CMN...

((Thanks, Rich--and the best of luck to you with Batmania! - ML))

PAUL ROSE
Hants

The copy of BEM you gave me at the October convention was christened by my partner with a cup of sugarless coffee, and afterwards it fell on the floor, and its deterioration was completed by his clumsy footwork, so by the time I safely had it in my bag, its condition was far from VG, in fact it fitted more in the "beaten-up" bracket. But what I did manage to decipher from its mucked-up pages did look very nice, that spoof Bullpen page was very witty.

Keep up the good work Martin, Bem is a really enjoyable little 'zine.

GEORGE BARNETT
Surrey

I don't usually write letters of comment, as fanzines usually leave me fairly impressed (like every issue of FU), or sickened (like the latest ((censored))). But Bemusing 3 was really great, well above average.

Besides the fact it <u>is</u> interesting, the whole look of it is so professional. The layouts are perfect on every page, and of course the space-typing helps tremendously. I can appreciate how much time this takes, as I'm doing it myself at the moment.

Your attempt at humour on page four actually made me laugh, and loudly too. This is rare, only PLOP! and serious Marvel comics can do this normally.

The last thing that I like about your mag, and reviews elsewhere too, is that you seem to have very similar views to my own, though there are exceptions to this. And one complaint: your ad rates are too high--unless your distribution is over 300 or so. It scared me off.

((Gee, George, if you liked the issue, why not come right out and say so, don't just drop hints! But seriously, I realise that my ad rates are high--it's because I have this theory that ads should pay for more than their own printing. I'd like to charge a pound a page, but printing alone comes to more than that. So what's a poor fan-editor to do?))

MAKE AN EDITOR HAPPY--WRITE A LETTER OF COMMENT TO BEMUSING MAGAZINE TODAY!

Emlock Tale-Enders

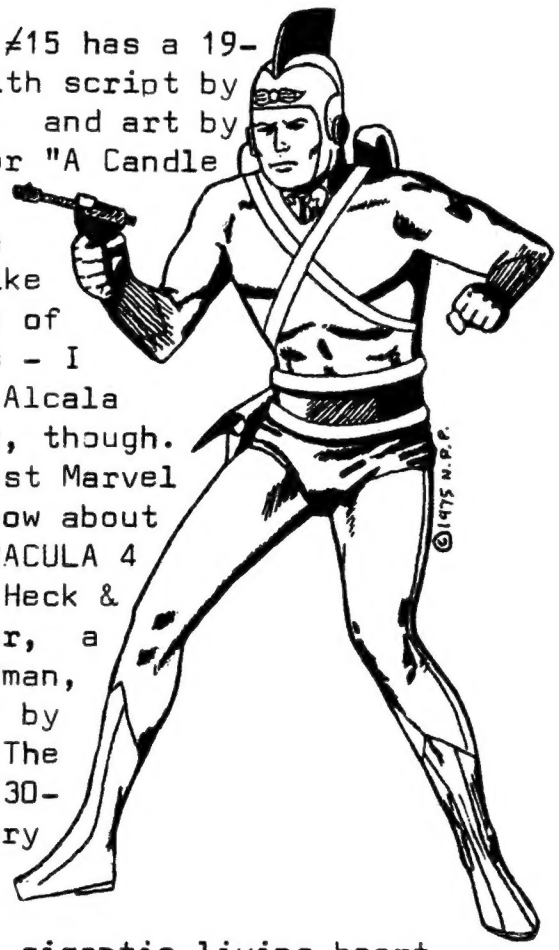
There's nothing like writing a column for one's own fanzine to give a reviewer a sense of security. I know when it will appear, how it will be presented, and how long it should be; why, I could even have it starting on the front cover...

But page 9 will do nicely; let's start with a run-down of a selection of March Marvel comics. One of the best is AMAZING ADVENTURES ≠29, featuring not the War of the Worlds but "KILLRAVEN, Warrior of the Worlds" -- 19 pages of very pretty art by Craig Russell, who is certainly an artist worth following, now; he coloured, inked, and pencilled the Don McGregor story, and did the job well. CAPTAIN AMERICA ≠183 is the second Frank Robbins issue, featuring the end of a substitute Cap, and also the end of the Nomad identity-crisis. Robbins seems to be settling down quite well on the art, now; he'll miss ≠184, as Herbie Trimpe substitutes, but he'll be back, as soon as he finishes moving house.

The general up-swing in comics sales means that from IRON MAN 73, Shell-head's back on a monthly schedule, with scripter (since ≠58) Mike Friedrich joined by the new artist team of Arvell Jones and Keith Pollard, for a "new look" that seems very much similar to the last 134 adventures--or am I being too cynical?

The good news with KA-ZAR ≠8 is that Alfredo Alcala is back, as inker on John Buscema's pencil layouts--which means the art is very pretty indeed. Alcala's style of inking is, I think, perfectly suited to Marvel's barbarian heroes and the lost races they encounter; more power to him. TOMB OF DRACULA ≠30, by the team supreme of Wolfman, Colan, & Palmer, features a visit by Blade the Vampire-Slayer; when you think what a comic about a vampire could be in lesser hands, you appreciate Marvel's effort even more. THOR 233, with the title "Midgard Aflame", starts a two-parter on an Earth/Asgard war, with Odin adventuring in California, and Loki up to his old tricks, courtesy of Gerry Conway, John Buscema, and Chic Stone--it looks as if it may be quite a story.

MAN-THING ≠15 has a 19-page tale, with script by Steve Gerber, and art by Rico Rival for "A Candle For Sainte-Cloud", which is quite unlike the usual run of monster tales - I would prefer Alcala art for Manny, though. And, for a last Marvel colour mag, how about GIANT-SIZE DRACULA 4 --art by Don Heck & Frank Springer, a plot by Wolfman, and a script by David Kraft? The title of the 30-page new story is "Let It Bleed", and it concerns a gigantic living heart ...now that's what I call weird! Don Heck art isn't my cup of tea (blood?), but it does the job - he won't be doing issue 5; apparently, which ought to be the first all-new issue.



But, before we get too far away from the Adam Strange illo, we ought to take a look at the three DC advance copies I've got here. HOUSE OF MYSTERY ≠229 (March) has a 36-page Gothic novel by Kanigher & Nestor Redondo, which is certainly better than the stories Dark Mansion & Sinister House used to carry; the art is menacing and pretty by turns, and the story has a twist or two. The other six tales are all reprints, one (Mort Meskin) from '57, one (Alex Toth) from '70, and four (Sparling, Grandenetti, Wrightson, & Wayne Howard) from '69, so this last 100-page HoM isn't the one with the most new material; it's a nice anthology, though. Nestor Redondo also drew SWAMP THING 15 (April), with a script by David Michelinie, of course; I hope he stays with the title, as his art is, as usual, perfect, and the cover, of a grotesque red demon grappling with our

mossy hero, ought to be in the running for best of the year, come December.

THE BRAVE AND THE BOLD 117 has the 30-year 3-striper, Sgt Rock, as The Batman's co-star once again. For a war hero, Rocky sure has a hard time; guilt for executing a coward is driving him nuts, until the Darknight Detective discovers a handy old spy plot. With Aparo artwork, it's fine. The reprints range from 13 pages of Joe Kubert's Viking Prince to 25 pages of one of those continued stories DC never did resolve, the Secret Six, by way of Green Arrow and Blackhawk, so it's a mixed issue - but there is enough good stuff to make it worthwhile.

BROTHERS OF THE SPEAR is a Gold Key title we do not hear much about - but then, it isn't distributed in the UK, so only the specialist dealers we see at Comicons offer it, at a hefty 25p. Issue 11's the current one, and the cover blurb tells all:"Surprise attack thwarts the plans of scheming slavers who infest The Spider's Nest". Natonga and Dan-El, our black & white heroes, take 25 pages to win--why, any Marvel man could do it in 17! MAGNUS, ROBOT FIGHTER ≠38 (Feb) has a 24-page Russ Manning tale reprinted from ten years ago -- Magnus is best known for the parody in issue two of Not Brand Echh, perhaps, but his stories were well drawn, and the SF on a par with the late lamented Mystery in Space.

But let's get back to Marvel, for one of their 75-cent black & white magazines, SAVAGE TALES ≠8, January. Ka-Zar stars in a 30-page story, assisted by Shanna, that well-known She-Devil, and drawn by John Buscema and Tony DeZuniga. "The Billion-Year War" is the intriguing title, while the cover is by fan artist Steve Fabian; it's different from the usual type of b&w mag cover, and rather striking. Also on hand is Brak the Barbarian, for the 11-page conclusion of the Doug Moench/Steve Gan version of "The Unspeakable Shrine", adapted from the John Jakes story, and, hidden away in the back, a 5-page Jann of the Jungle reprint. The art on this isn't credited - but it's Al Williamson and Ralph Mayo, which can't be at all bad. 46 pages of art, then, which is around the average - but almost 5 pages of house ads means that they could have done better on the value front. There's no Lin Carter article this time around, but instead Robert Weinberg gives a brief run-down on the three issues of the Ka-Zar pulp published back in 1936 and 1937. At 20 pence, how can we lose?

Warren give us VAMPIRELLA 40 (March), with a colour Dracula tale drawn by Esteban Maroto, a 12-page SF tale with nice art by Paul Neary, and a Ken Kelly back cover. In all, there's 59 pages of new story for $1.25, plus three full-cover illos, by Enrich, Kelly, and Jose Gonzalez--that's not very good value. But SPIRIT ≠6 (Feb) is shorter; 56 pages, one Eisner/Kelly cover. The colour story is new; the others come from '46, '47, '48 (3), & '50 (2) -- all good stuff, but no bigger than previous issues, which were 25 cents cheaper; a sign of the times.

More Tale-Enders next time! -ML

THE BEMUSING MAGAZINE FANZINE DIRECTORY...

FANTASY UNLIMITED	COMIC MEDIA NEWS	TBS	COMIC FANDOM BULLETIN
current issue ≠23; bi-monthly, 15p-- 4 issues 50p, 8 for 95p, 12 £1.35.	current issue ≠18; regularly, 16p-- 4 issues for 64p.	current issue ≠3 quarterly, 20p-- 2 issues 50p, 4 for £1.00.	current issue ≠2 (?) bi-monthly -- issues 3 to 7, 42p.
from: Fantasy Unlimited.	from: Richard Burton.	from: George Barnett.	from: Fantasy Domain.

Please enclose s.a.e. with any inquiry, add 5p postage to single issue price, and allow a fortnight for replies - more useful addresses in Bemusing ≠5. -ML

Reviews

PHANTOM STRANGER ≠35 (March)

After a long spell in the doldrums, this comic is finally regaining its feet. Writer Michelinie takes it onto a Cthulhu Mythos-type storyline, which should make for interesting reading. There is also better-than-average art from Talaoc, whom I have begun to admire, after seeing his work on The Unknown Soldier. Even the Jim Aparo cover brings back fond memories of those on issues 11 to 20.

-Nigel Edwards

HULK 186 (April)

The last times I tried, in Bem-3 and N-Zine Special ≠1, I wasn't able to do a review of Hulk's mag due to circumstances entirely beyond my control. So, excuse me a second, while I check to see nobody is around... ((the title is "The Day of The Devastator", by Len Wein & Herb Trimpe, & we get 18 pages of story)) ...no, I can't see anyone. Right, here goes, this issue is...er... umm... er...I can't think...of anything to say...must think... uhh, why is it always so hard for Edwoods to... er ...this makes Edwoods MAD, and the MADDER Edwoods gets, the STRONGER... ((everybody out of this fanzine! Hey, Ruan, Greg, Ed, Supes, Insider, run for it, Nigel's going a funny colour, and growing...!))

-NPE

WONDER WOMAN ≠216 (March)

To be honest, I only bought this comic because Black Canary was on the cover -- Nick Cardy can draw nice girls, even if he can't manage super-heroes. Inside, the comic is drawn by Rosenberger in his Lois Lane style, which is okay; he gives Black Canary a "little girl lost" look, which makes her come on very frail. Although Wonder Woman seems a bit overweight, the girls of Paradise Island are...((hold on, Edwoods--what about the story? -ML))..The story..? I'm afraid I wasn't paying that much attention, Martin, I've forgotten... ((Oh, brother! And to think he gets his copy of Bem-4 free for this!))

-NPE

IRON JAW ≠1 (Jan)

You won't believe this, but I really do like this title. It's got everything a poor taste comic needs -- wanton and sadistic violence, very thinly disguised sex, and a continued next issue blurb. A guaranteed success--yes, I shall certainly be buying the next issues--((it makes a change from Green Arrow and other good features, I suppose)) and wallowing in the general mediocrity. -NPE ((we are indeed most fortunate to have Nigel P. Edwards on our staff -- he is one of the few people who can really understand and appreciate the less high-brow titles. -ML))

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Nigel edits his own... er, how can I describe it? Fanzine? It's a lot of fun, and it's only 13½p for the next issue, from Nigel at The Bunglow, Clark's Holiday Camp, North Cliff Road, Hornsea, North Humberside HU18 1JN --you have been warned. Why not buy a copy? he needs the money, to buy our page six illo off Superswipe...Your 13½p in stamps will help him reach his target -- you know it makes sense?

-ML

NEWS continued from page 3...

2001, & Iron Jaw in The Barbarians, Steve Mitchell Targitt, & John Albano Iron Jaw. TALES OF EVIL ≠2 introduces the Bog Beast --SAVAGE COMBAT TALES ≠2 has a back-story drawn by Alex Toth.

CHARLTON: A FLOOD OF NEW TITLES HERE TOO!

July cover-dated comics are VENGEANCE SQUAD (art by Frank Bolle, with a back-up "Michael Mauser, Private Eye" by Staton), DOOMSDAY PLUS ONE, HOUSE OF YANG (by Joe Gill & Sanho Kim, featuring Yang's cousin in 19th century China), BEYOND THE GRAVE, & CREEPY THINGS; the following month sees SCARY TALES and MONSTER HUNTERS.

THE REST: RED CIRCLE TO RETURN

MADHOUSE ≠98 is to be published soon, with a new format. Issue 71 of Warren's CREEPY features art by Wood, Adams, Toth, Wrightson, John Severin, & Maroto. A 2nd issue of STAR*REACH is now finalised; it will have an Adams cover, and two stories by Jim Starlin. And talking of Neal Adams covers, Ballantine are re-issuing the 1st six TARZAN books with fine cover illos by him. Finally, Caveman books are the new trend - DC has KONG THE UNTAMED (Orlando-Oleck-Alcala), Marvel SKULL THE SLAYER (Wolfman-Gan), while Charlton get there first, cover-dated May, with KORG 70,000 BC by Pat Boyette. I love a happy ending!

THE ATLAS VERDICT

"From The Ashes" January-- ≠1 PHOENIX ≠2 --March "And the Sea Ran Red"

Nice to see more Amendola art, which at the same time succeeds in being well detailed and then very spare and simple. A good, fairly original script as well, but I'd like to see issue 2 before I make a firm judgement. -NPE

Another interesting issue, as Gabriel Levy concludes the origin story editor Jeff Rovin began, with Amendola art once again--a more interesting production than the average super-hero book. The biblical parting of the waters was far-out! -ML

"Enter The Grim Ghost" January-- ≠1 GRIM GHOST ≠2 --March "The Grim Ghost Returns"

I like this one, too, although Colon's art looks better in black & white. It is as Our Esteemed Editor describes it in FU 23, but he did, however, omit to mention that Grimmy was betrayed by the weakness of the flesh. Whoops, none of that, this is a high-class fanzine! -NPE

In his second outing, poor old Grimmy is saddled with a 20th century secret identity, and the daughter of the police commissioner as romantic interest. I just can't see where this series can go--but I could make a rude suggestion! I just hope Fleischer's successor, Tony Isabella, can make the feature into something okay. -ML

"Wulf the Barbarian" February-- ≠1 WULF ≠2 --April "The Beast of Famine"

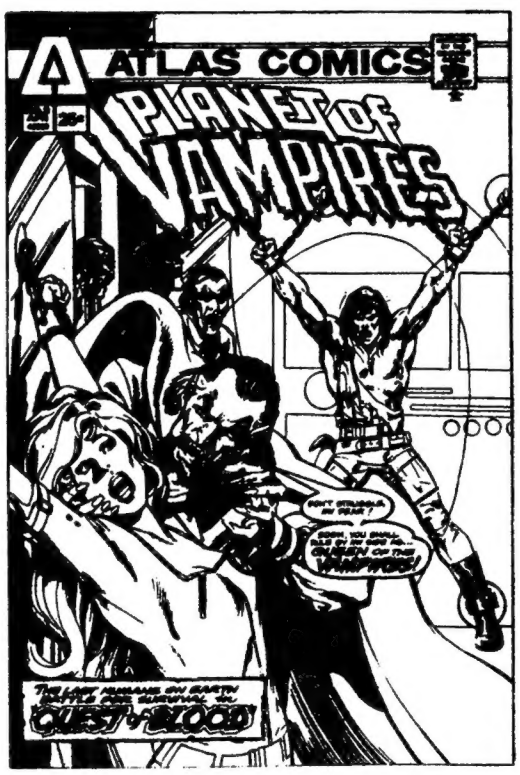
This must be one of the best of Atlas' range of titles; writer/artist Larry Hama (assisted by inker Klaus Janson) has made this, while a little traditional in plot, visually most attractive; his art here is reminiscent of Gil Kane, while the backgrounds seem to be influenced by one of the top French artists, Druillet. A book not to be missed. -RL

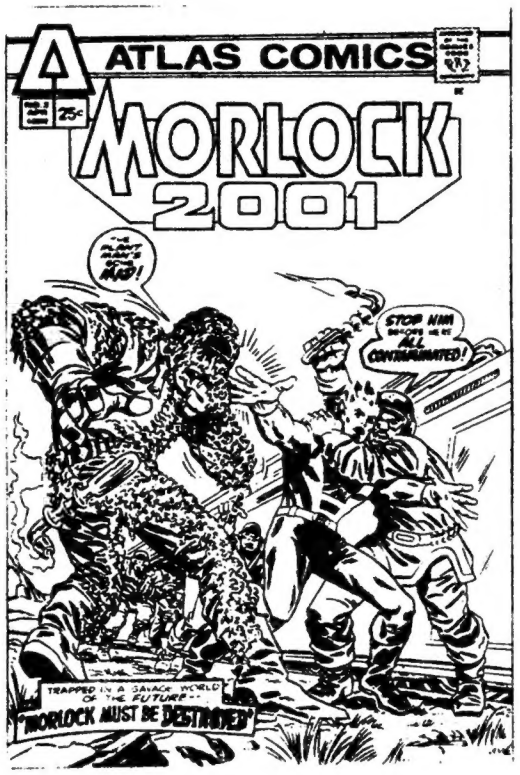
One criticism of these second issues is that they have cover blurbs and word balloons -- but that's no great criticism of Wulf. A nice story, very well drawn by Hama & Janson--but the companion he gains is a little Grey Mouserish, and his name, "Rymnstrdle", is a bit silly. I enjoyed it all, though, this tale of pernicious Magicks; a fine comic. -ML

"Reborn In Battle" February-- ≠1 SAVAGE COMBAT TALES "Bounty"

This war book, featuring Sgt Striker's Death Squad, is obviously based on the DC war line. The lead 12-pager introduces an unlikely fivesome, but Archie Goodwin can do better--and I'm sure he will, soon.

This 8-page back-up story is also by Archie Goodwin - art is by Jack Sparling, who isn't up to the lead story's artist, Al McWilliams, for either technique or detail. A neat story, though. -ML




ATLAS COMICS
MORLOCK 2001
STOP HIM BEFORE HE IS ALL CONTAMINATED!
TRAPPED IN A SAVAGE WORLD OF THE FUTURE...
MORLOCK MUST BE DESTROYED